to conclude with two issues. Firstly, I am not totally convinced by the use of 'Americans' to describe the First Peoples of what we now call the Americas. I understand its utility. However, the term would have made no sense to the peoples Mancall is referring to, and 'America' itself was a European construction. I do however appreciate Mancall's impulse in using it, and that brings me to the second issue, which is not just for Mancall's book, but for all early modernists writing about this period in Atlantic history. This book is obviously underwritten by a desire for a more balanced historiography, one that treats the First Peoples as agents, not merely subjects of European will. But in doing so, my feeling is that it implies an equity of exchange which is largely fictive: the Nahua people mentioned above were dying as a consequence of European invasion. Mancall has closed out a problem with which we still need to grapple. How do historians of early modern Europe and its colonies properly reconcile the history of Europeans in the Americas, with its death, disease, and land theft, with the knowledge that historical grievances remain unresolved at a national and international level, and while the communities of the First Peoples are still living with the consequences of European invasion of their world? Writing as an Australian conscious of the injustices of colonialism on my continent, and the ongoing legacy of dispossession, I find it increasingly unsatisfactory that early modern Europeanists do not take explicit account of this brutal empire-building in their intellectual and cultural histories. For historians of the early modern Atlantic basin, the past was indeed a foreign country: one that was already inhabited.

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Morton, Nicholas, *Encountering Islam on the First Crusade*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017; paperback; pp. xii, 319; R.R.P. US$29.99, £22.99; ISBN 9781108444866.

So much has been written about the First Crusade in recent decades that the appearance of a new monograph on the subject is more likely to inspire weariness than enthusiasm. Fortunately, Nicholas Morton's *Encountering Islam on the First Crusade* manages not only to offer innovative perspectives on the (in)famous expedition to reclaim Jerusalem launched by Pope Urban II in 1095, but also to advance an intriguing reinterpretation of one of its most frequently discussed aspects. In an ambitious and wide-ranging study, Morton sets out to assess the extent to which the First Crusade acted as a turning point in the history of relations between Christianity and Islam. His conclusions form an explicit counterpoint to the notion of the First Crusade as a 'Clash of Civilizations' and cast doubt on the utility of ideas inspired by Samuel Huntington's model to the field of crusading history. Though the pervasiveness of such ideas among specialists is perhaps overstated (or, at least, implicitly overemphasized), this argument acts as a useful corrective to long-standing popular conceptions of the crusades and underpins Morton's nuanced analysis of Christian perceptions of and interactions with Muslims at the time of the First Crusade.

As Morton himself indicates, this topic is 'well trampled' (p. 11), and the first half of the book features some unavoidable re-treading of old ground. Readers who are familiar with the crusades and the history of Christian–Muslim relations will find little new in Chapters 1 and 2. These lay the groundwork for the ensuing analysis by outlining the patterns of conflict and contact between the two religions prior to the First Crusade and examining the objectives of the expedition in light of what the crusaders themselves actually knew—or thought they knew—about 'the Turks' specifically and Islam in general before their departure. The conclusion here is that the Turks 'were largely unknown' (p. 109) to western Europeans until the arrival of the earliest crusaders in Asia Minor in 1096, whereas generic ideas about 'pagans' and 'Saracens' were widespread. Morton deduces this important (though perhaps unsurprising) point from a careful reading of contemporary charters, letters, and chronicles that demonstrate just how inchoate knowledge of different Muslim ethnic and political groupings was in western Christendom at this time.

The issue of the crusaders' encounters with their Muslim opponents only really comes into focus in Chapters 3 and 4, which constitute the book's most substantial contribution in terms of the history of crusading ideas and experiences. Through a thoroughly documented study of the major chronicle sources for the First Crusade, Morton traces changing Western depictions of the crusaders' Seljuq and Fatimid enemies and demonstrates that the earliest non-participant chronicles of the expedition drew on twelfth-century scholarly trends and traditions to refine and reshape the portrayal of Muslims in the 'eyewitness' accounts. This section of the analysis opens up a fascinating discussion about the extent of anti-Islamic 'hatred' among the crusaders, the notion of the Turks as flawed human beings just like Christians, their role in crusading ideology as intended recipients of the spiritual 'message' of the crusade, and the influence of eastern Christian writings on conceptions of Islam in the Western intellectual tradition (though not very persuasively in the case of Robert the Monk's use of Deuteronomy 32.30, which Morton ascribes to familiarity with the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius, pp. 222–24).

The final chapter of the book, which deals with the impact of the First Crusade on western Christendom's attitude towards the twelfth-century Islamic world, is perhaps the least compelling. While Morton's argument that 'the First Crusade does not seem to have had the effect of convulsing western Christendom into a more hostile stance towards Islam' (p. 268) holds true in many respects, his quantitative methodology, which relies on counting and tabulating the number of references to Muslims in letter-collections and chronicle sources, is hampered by the difficulty of obtaining a statistically significant and representative sample from a corpus of extant texts that represents only the tip of an iceberg. That Morton expressly adopts the approach of 'researchers studying modern-era history, who often judge an issue's importance by the number of column inches devoted to it in a specific newspaper or magazine' (p. 238), hinders this analysis from the outset.

One of the most stimulating and refreshing ideas to emerge from this book is that 'the First Crusade was simply the latest in a long line of counter-offenses launched against Turkic groups by multiple civilisations whether Islamic, Christian, or Hindu from across Eurasia and Northern Africa' (p. 73). By both expanding the geographical lens of the traditional enquiry and providing a detailed examination of the terminology and ideas embedded in a tightly-knit group of sources, Morton succeeds in making a thought-provoking contribution to long-standing debates about the First Crusade. It may not have been a 'clash' of Huntingtonian proportions in historical reality, but Morton is surely right that 'multiple societies have assumed that it [was]—and then built their history and identities around that "fact"' (p. 280).

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Muecke, Frances, and Maurizio **Campanelli**, eds, *The Invention of Rome: Biondo Flavio's* Roma Triumphans *and Its Worlds* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 576), Paris, Librairie Droz, 2017; paperback; pp. 296; 5 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €39.00; ISBN 9782600047890.

Nothing better illustrates the *Birth of the Modern* (to use Paul Johnson's memorable title) than the almost total eclipse that has been the fate of books and compilations that once enjoyed nearly universal respect among scholars of an earlier age. This volume undertakes the task of reinstating the reputation of Biondo's *Roma triumphans* (1459), an encyclopedic treatise in ten books on the institutions of ancient Rome, and achieves its purpose comprehensively. The work itself, in the words of the editors, 'is one of the greatest literary monuments of Italian humanism and its greatest legacy to European culture in the early modern period. As an encyclopedic work of all-encompassing scope it might be called a cultural space, a site in which the culture of an entire epoch is collected, synthesized, and passed on' (pp. 11–12). This is high praise verging on hyperbole, reflecting the editors' obvious passion for their subject. Phrases like 'greatest legacy' and 'cultural space' come on a bit strong but to be fair they are skilfully backed up and persuasively defended by an array of learned essays by first-rate scholars who share the editors' enthusiasm.

The taut if effusive introduction is followed by thirteen papers classified into three parts: 1. Context, Genre and Purpose; 2. *Mores et instituta;* and 3. Reception. Five items conclude the volume: lists of contributors, editions cited, and illustrations; and two indexes of manuscripts and of names.

We are faced with a worldview that is not easily recovered by any reader who is not very familiar with the ancient as well as medieval intellectual furniture associated with the closely-related notions of *humanitas* and *Romanitas*. Biondo's major preoccupation was with the notion of '*Roma aeterna*', the continuity of Rome, from the empire of the Caesars to the City of God, from paganism to Christianity. To thinkers like Biondo, and Dante too, there is a mystical quality about Rome that transcends ordinary patriotism: Roma is the world's mother,